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People vs. the World A View From Another Window

By Aziz Pabaney

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A widely held view in the one-third world (OTW) of economically developed countries is that the major threat to the environment comes from the overpopulated two-thirds world (TTW) of the poorer countries. When at Pendle Hill, I served for a time with the Environmental Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, which had singled out the population problem as a major concern. Perhaps my view from the TTW window may help balance the picture.

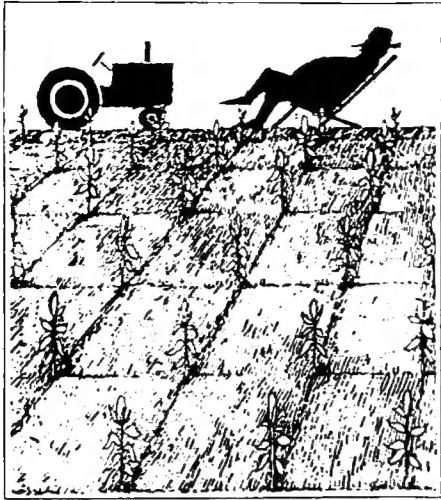
A plenary session at the World Conference at Tela, Honduras, in 1992, experienced lively exchanges between Friends, mostly from Latin America and the TTW on the one hand, and from some OTW Friends on the other. Put simply, TTW Friends felt that Columbus's "discovery" and what followed had been destructive of their continent, their cultures, and their lives. Bob Vogel's report to the Pacific Yearly Meeting says, "the Latins saw it quite differently."

Malcolm Edmunds states the problem correctly, that the real war is between people and the world. His detailed explanations and examples, however, seem to imply that most of the problems occur in the TTW

and have to be corrected there. Though he does mention the greed of the rich, the activities of the poor get more attention.

At the outset, it may be stated that limiting population is necessary. But the TTW may see it differently. Edmunds states "... it is pressure from increasing demands that are placing the world's natural systems in jeopardy." This seems to suggest that the increase in population is the most important factor, whereas seen from a TTW view, it is the increasing demands of the OTW that is the major cause. With the average person in the United States consuming 40 times the energy of the average Indian, the effective U.S. population would be equivalent to ten billion Indians.

Malcolm Edmunds states, as a first principle of ecology, "that the majority of animal populations increase rapidly to a limit imposed by their food supply, and then crash." This applies to most animal populations under natural conditions. It does not apply to those peculiar animals, human beings, who claim to be intelligent. Their "intelligence" enables them to extract food and other resources from beyond their natural boundaries. Britain imports at least 30 percent of its food requirements. The Netherlands requires five times its total land area merely to grow the fodder that is consumed by its cattle.



The "developed market-economy countries" as a whole import more food than they export. The United States imports more meat than it exports. In 1977, it exported \$608 million worth of meat, but imported over \$1.2 billion worth. Much of the imported meat comes from South America and Africa, where peasants are being displaced from their land by beef-producing companies and wealthy cattle herders. As a result, rainforests are chopped down and turned into pastures for cattle.

Europe and the United States seem to have exceeded their carrying capacity as far as food is concerned. As another example, Britain imported fuelwood from Scandinavia as far back as the 14th century. Today, most of Europe (and Japan) import hardwood from the tropics, besides a wide spectrum of medicinal plants, cotton, and silk fabrics, jute carpet backing, castor oil as lubricant, and thousands of other items. All this represents an overload of European and North American carrying capacity.

All modifications of ecosystems to maximize their carrying capacity must reduce the habitat available to the original species. It must be admitted that human beings — as they spread over the earth hundreds of thousands of years ago — always destroyed other species. It seems that the problems of Europe's excessive population was "solved" by forwarding its people to the Americas, Africa, Australia, New

Zealand, and a number of other smaller regions. All this carries a history of inhumanity that people in the TTW still recall. We need not recount them here. Human beings are the only animals that extend their territories by killing their own kind. Wherever they have gone they have destroyed local ecosystems and local values. In North America, the eastern seaboard forests were first cleared for plantations of cotton and tobacco.

One agrees with Malcolm Edmunds when he states that the natural ecosystems have to be altered as little as possible. Could perhaps Europe and the United States also restore their ecosystems to what they were centuries ago?

Much of the overload of the TTW's carrying capacity comes from the demand of agricultural produce from the so-called developed states. While global population may have increased fourfold in the last century, industrial output, along with its inseparable resource consumption and pollution production, has increased 50 times. We may ask, who should be pulled up first?

If we visit a village in India, we are likely to see little girls carrying water, collecting firewood, and looking after grazing cattle and younger siblings. They have to do all of these things because their parents are unable to earn enough money either from the little land they possess or the jobs they have. A major cause of this was the colonial policy that turned commonly held land into a commodity that could be bought and sold: by unjust taxes that forced them into the hands of money lenders; by industrialization that replaced large number of artisans by a few machines running on fossil fuels; and by many other means of modernization. We may recall the radical faith of Gandhi: he had rejected modernization as early as 1908 as being against the human spirit. The whole thing was wrong, he felt.

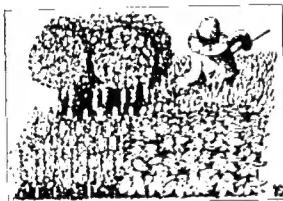
Today the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades, and Super 301 policies are trying to make the genetic resources of the world — up to now freely available to everyone — into genetically engineered commodities, which even the poor may have to purchase. It is ironic that farmers who have developed genetic resources over millennia would now have to purchase the same at high cost.

Poverty in the TTW arises from previous and current greed of the rich in the OTW as well as from the rich in the TTW themselves. The impoverished are forced to destroy their environment after the rich have extracted tea, sugar, and other valuable natural resources from the virgin forests.

Population growth in the TTW needs to be limited, but this can come only when people are assured of a reasonable standard of living and security in their old age, as Malcolm Edmunds rightly says. This cannot be achieved by mere debt cancellation. We cannot view poverty as an attribute that people in the TTW possess like some disease that can be cured by taking an economic medicine. It is a result of a process of impoverishment continuously maintained and "improved" by the Western industrial system of development with its insatiable demands for more and more material things. This is why, it seems, that cancelling today's debts will not help, unless the processes that led the countries into debt are also eliminated.

Edmunds rightly recommends the lessons to be learned from the societies of the Americas, Africa, and Asia that lived in harmony with their environments. Perhaps the Western development pattern needs to grow into a sustainable system; otherwise, the destruction of the global environment will continue. Since we are an inseparable part of the environment, we will be destroyed too.

To stop the violence on the environment and maintain the integrity of Creation, [we] may need to discern anew our [concern for simplicity] and perhaps add a new dimension to our peace testimony.



Aziz Pabaney is a member of Bombay (India) Meeting. In 1991-92 he was a student at Pendle Hill. Much of the historical data in his article is from an article by Winin Pereria, co-author of the book Asking the Earth (Earthscan, 1991).

Mississippi River Sends a Powerful Message

Reprinted from Fall 1993 Newsletter of American Rivers, 801 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20003.

The Mississippi River sent us a powerful message this summer: our reliance on shortsighted engineering solutions, coupled with our failure to rein in floodplain development, have put people and property at risk.

One of the critical questions that has emerged from this summer's devastating flooding is to what extent government policies may have made matters worse. Was much of the damage preventable? All of it was predictable. What has become clear is that how we react to this summer's flood will determine how well we withstand the next one.

Instead of providing protection, the river's 1,275 levees cut it off from its floodplain and force its flow into ever tighter channels, making flood waters rise higher and run faster. Scientists as long ago as 1858 have found that levees actually increase flood crests, transferring flooding problems downstream with a vengeance.

The flood waters of a river free of dams and levees fan out over low-lying areas. These floodplains act as natural sponges by storing water and releasing it over time. Some say that two months of nearly nonstop rain would overwhelm the best flood control efforts. But others point to farms and shopping malls, and wonder if the loss of more than 19 million acres of wetlands from the drainage basins of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers north of St. Louis is also to blame.

The river's message has even reached Congress, where several bills have been introduced to study the nation's flood control policies and revamp the National Flood Insurance Program. American Rivers has aggressively lobbied decision-makers in Washington, through direct contact and through the media, to comprehensively coordinate our flood control efforts in the Upper Mississippi River basin.

No single piece of legislation or other authority outlines a comprehensive set of measurable goals and objectives for the nation's floodplain management. At the federal level, there are at least 25 subdivisions of 12 departments and agencies that have some small piece of the nation's flood control puzzle. At the same time, states administer locally adopted and enforced land-use regulations, and local governments oversee local drainage and stormwater management. This subjects the overall issue of flood management to the tyranny of small decisions.

A series of laws, executive orders and directives, administrative regulations, interagency actions, and agency policies and programs attempt to thread together all of these flood control efforts. But there is no lead agency. The Federal Emergency Management Agency chairs a voluntary interagency task force that reviews the web of programs, policies, and regulation but has no authority to make changes.

In floodplain policies, some of the inconsistencies result from differing attitudes and expectations about the ultimate responsibility and commitment of resources to respond to floodplain problems. Agencies also work at cross purposes: while the Soil Conservation Service fills in headwater wetlands for agricultural and flood control needs, the Environmental Protection Agency advocates wetland preservation to improve water quality.

Efforts to define a national flood control strategy began in the first half of this century and culminated in the Unified National Program for Managing Flood Losses in 1966. The program has been revised several times, providing recommendations but basically leaving agencies free to operate as they like.

The Clinton Administration took an important step in August when it instructed the Corps and other agencies to consider non-structural alternatives like wetland restoration when they begin to rebuild failed levees, effectively reversing more than a century of ill-advised flood control policy.

In recent years, as cost-sharing requirements have increased, a few communities have tried such nonstructural approaches. For example, on the Charles River in Boston, officials spent \$10 million to acquire wetlands rather than spend \$100 million on dams and levees. On Boulder Creek in Boulder, CO,

and Mingo Creek in Tulsa, OK, officials created recreational greenways that double as stormwater detention areas, and on the Kickapoo River in Soldiers Grove, WI, officials relocated the entire business district from the floodplain to an upland site.

Other communities have tried land treatment measures that reduce runoff from agricultural lands to streams by improving infiltration of rainfall into the soil and reducing the sedimentation that can clog stream channels or storage reservoirs; restoring and preserving of wetlands that store flood waters; floodproofing buildings through increased elevation; and providing education about flood hazards.

Part of the problem is that floodplain management is still being conducted on a segment-by-segment, structure-by-structure basis that does not consider how flood control efforts operate in concert. On the Upper Mississippi, flood control structures may be federal, nonfederal governmental, or private. At present, 275 federal levees in the region—those built by the Corps with federal funds to federal specifications, and more than 1,000 private and nonfederal levees, most of which were either overtopped or ruptured during recent floods—straitjacket the Mississippi. Most of private and nonfederal levees are built and maintained by levee or drainage districts to widely differing specifications and regulations. Many are completely unregulated. The lack of coordination explains why, despite spending \$25 billion on flood control nationally, per capita flood damage is more than twice as costly as it was before these programs were instituted.

One major flood control policy failure is the National Flood Insurance Program. Though intended to direct new development away from the floodplain, the federal program provides landowners with a financial safety net that actually encourages developers to build in flood-prone areas.

Initiated in 1968 and expanded in 1973, the federal government made flood insurance available for property in flood hazard areas in return for enactment and enforcement of floodplain management regulations designed to reduce future flood losses.

But only 2.4 million policies of an estimated potential of 11 million are in force. And the existing premium base is too low to permit the National Floodplain

Insurance Program to operate on a fully actuarial basis. As of July 1, 1993, the program had a deficit of \$18 million, with thousands of claims still to be paid for damage caused not only by the Mississippi flooding, but also by Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki, and other storms.

As the costs of the flood mount — \$6.2 billion has been earmarked for disaster relief — American Rivers and other conservation groups are concerned that, in the rush to rebuild the levee system, significant, long-term flood management issues will be overlooked. Flood control experts say there has never been a better opportunity to rewrite the nation's failed flood control policies to incorporate solutions that reunite the river with its floodplain and create real disincentives for development.

Lewis Green, an attorney who fought such development in Chesterfield, MO, said "It was plain as day that Chesterfield would eventually be under 12 feet of water. We can't keep telling people that it's safe to build on the floodplain."

Solar Energy in Africa

by Joseph W. Khisa

Economies of many countries presently rely on fossil fuels as an energy source. This reliance has been more phenomenal in the transport and domestic sector. Unfortunately, only a few regions of the Earth have been blessed with deposits of these fossil fuels, which leads to massive importation for those countries without the deposits. For some countries the deposits exist but are not economically feasible to attain.

The importation of fossil fuels is accompanied by high bills payable in foreign currencies. For weak third-world economies where, more often than not, foreign exchange is a scarce resource, this can be very devastating. A global oil crisis similar to those during the early 70's and 80's and, more recently, during the Gulf crisis does not make things any better. The picture gets more grim on realization that fossil fuels are not inexhaustible and their uses are increasing every day.

Petroleum byproducts in Africa are now vast in terms of materials such as plastics, clothing, chemicals,

fertilizers, and drugs. Environmental issues have not spared the energy sector either. More and more emphasis is being placed on developing and using more environmentally friendly energy sources. All these issues have left the energy scientists and technologists looking for reliable alternative energy sources that are inexhaustible, environmentally friendly, and economical. One such alternative is solar energy, the source of almost all other energies. It is technically and economically feasible to supply all of man's energy needs from the sun, the most abundant energy source in Africa.

How abundant solar energy is can be appreciated by scientific estimates which indicate that African countries receive ten thousand times more energy from the sun than they produce by all other means. A source worth exploiting. From economic, technical, and energy quantity standpoints, solar energy can have three broad applications, namely heating and cooling buildings, the chemical and biological conversion of organic materials to liquid, solid, and gaseous fuels, and the generation of electricity.

Currently in Africa, solar energy applications are limited to the heating of water and the generation of electricity on a small scale where the electric energy generated can only be put to use in the lighting of houses and for small home appliances with low energy consumption.

It is high time ways of creating abundant solar energy in Africa are explored. Bringing solar energy to the point of practical application at an affordable price remains an elusive goal. Modest gains have been recorded for solar energy when used for water heating, electrical lighting, and solar space heating. What is lacking here is the abundant technology. Solar energy technology is very low and is the biggest hindrance to this energy development. Throughout history technology has pressed onward like a glacier, overturning everything in its way and grinding all opposition into dust. In Africa, we lack the power of technology in solar systems, which can act as a multiplier to encourage faster development of this energy.

For effective harnessing of solar energy - technological, climatological, and geographical issues of a location have to be looked into. This background, along with the economics, and performance, are evaluated as regards the utilization of solar energy.

This implies that knowledge of the available solar radiation is vital. The particular devices to be used in collecting solar energy will depend primarily on the applications. The most common devices are flat thermal energy collectors, solar concentrators, and photoelectric voltaic cells. The most efficient and practical solar concentrators in use are parabolic cylinders which are able to provide the same heating effect with the changing directions of the sun's rays with the rotation of the Earth. This is because the heat exchanger has to remain located at the focus of the parabolic device, from an optical standpoint. Solar concentrators achieve temperature in excess of 150°C. Photovoltaic cells convert sunlight directly to electricity. These have been used in rural areas of Africa especially for lighting and running of water pumps in areas where the normal grid system does not reach.

With the high advancement in solar energy collection, the setback here has been in the storage of the energy. Energy devices such as the solar ponds, rock-bed storages, and thermal stratification have been developed, but a lot more research still has to be done on their suitability.

It is imperative that the necessary research and economic support for all aspects of solar technology be made available in countries such as Africa. A smooth transition to alternative energy forms like solar is the key to reducing the world's economically, politically, and environmentally dangerous reliance on fossil fuels.



Sustainable Society Action Project

Review of the Fourth Annual Sustainable Society Action Project's Delaware Valley Conference, October 11, 1993

By Ernest and Elaine Cohen

The underlying philosophy of Sustainable Society Action Project (SSAP) is that a) unless current patterns are changed, there will be a worldwide collapse of the social economy, b) the industrialized West, which initiated these nonsustainable patterns, must take the lead in changing them, c) changes should be evolutionary, voluntary, and participatory for all involved, and d) alternative patterns should be fundamentally satisfying to human beings. The consensus that emerged from the previous conferences is that we must change our behavior in order to soften this impending collapse. Changing behavior means changing the way we think and feel about what we and others are doing. It is necessary to change the culture of almost all people on this Planet to new forms which are compatible with sustainability. A first step is to recognize that educated middle class people in America also have a culture which must evolve.

Unfortunately, social scientists know rather little about the evolutionary processes by which culture develops. We know many things about the phenomenon of "culture," but not enough to deliberately evolve new culture patterns. To what extent have the present cultures evolved "naturally," and to what extent has the development of culture patterns been affected by deliberate choices of the people involved? How can a new or different culture be preserved in the presence of the surrounding majority? This conference explored the phenomenon of culture in the industrialized countries, so that we can ask appropriate questions with regard to guiding the evolution of our culture into patterns that will be required in the future.

Professor Hostetler discussed the life and religion of the Amish. Our concern in inviting him to the conference was to understand how a small minority can preserve and evolve their own culture patterns while surrounded by majority with different values. The Amish are a potential guide to the future, with respect to their low resource-use way of life, although they have large families. It is difficult to identify which elements are just "Amishness".

Many concerned people look to the government for action in making the necessary changes. The two means by which governments can act on culture are control of the schools, and control of the media. For either of these to function, there must be supportive "metamemes" which direct children and adults to accept their culture content from the respective channels. It was agreed that the traditional authority of parents and older people has largely broken down in the western world, but there is no socially beneficial replacement. The peer group culture, which tends to reject school while accepting violence and materialism from TV, is the significant social context for children and teens in today's world. Since the peer group culture is non-sustainable, it will be necessary for those trying to change their own cultures to make the home and community the center of their children's values. This will serve to insulate from the peer group, from TV, and filter the messages which come from formal education.

Ronald Brand showed that productivity can be improved when workers become involved and feel that their opinions are respected: a different culture in the workplace. In the industrialized world, which splits home from work, it is very likely that individuals will have different culture patterns for each major context of their lives. Note that the open exchange of information required to improve productivity requires that management, as well as workers, participate in the new culture patterns of cooperation.

This conference took a holistic approach to culture, rather than trying to dissect it into small bits. The resident change agent, as described by Torben Jenks, succeeds by participating with the community in their culture activities. Perhaps this conference was a first, small step towards developing an applied social science for guiding culture change.

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On Despair

by Sylvan Willig

*Everything is plundered, betrayed, sold,
Death's great black wing scrapes the air,
Misery gnaws to the bone.
Why then do we not despair?*

Anna Akhmatova

Probably all of you who have a passion for our Earth Mother and who have come to understand deeply that she is your very lives—the very cells of your body—have at times felt despair over our continued destruction of her. I think such despair is merited and a natural result of the blessing we humans alone have been given of foresight and intuition. Given that the ozone layer is already so depleted, is getting worse annually, and the fact that we still go on releasing chemicals into the air which will continue to eat away at O3 for decades; and given that among other tragedies increased UV radiation kills phytoplankton which is one of the most basic links in the global food chain and produces 70% of Earth's oxygen; there's a chance that something catastrophic on a global level will eventually occur. And that's enough to make anyone despair and feel there's no use in even trying to make a difference. In fact, it may indeed already be too late to save the ozone—we don't know.

One of my jobs is as a door-to-door canvasser for Greenpeace and many nights on turf I run into people who suffer from just such despair. "There's nothing you or I can do to change things. What can you do to transform the status quo which is so strongly defended by powerful governments, enormous global companies, and general public apathy? Why bother to fight it?"

Haven't we all felt this? Why should I bother with a job which makes me walk in cold dark winter nights in a neighborhood in which I've never before been, knocking on doors of total strangers, asking them to give a damn, when this person would rather return to their comfortable TV show than talk to me. Why don't I just get a nice well paying desk job?

On a recent sojourn in the western US I visited the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument in western Colorado. The writings of one of the first white people to study the canyon are true—"no other canyon in North America combines the depth, narrowness, sheerness, and somber countenance of the Black Canyon." Unlike other innumerable canyons of the West where waterways are carving through unstable soft sandstone, the Gunnison River has been gradually gnawing through the Earth's oldest and most impenetrable base rocks. I was truly inspired by the result when I considered the ever-so-slow process.

Consider: A single drop of rain falls without any being noticing and finds its way into the modest Gunnison River—a river so relatively insignificant most Americans have never even heard of it. After the Gunnison had already forged through the softer surface volcanic rock, the Earth underneath began to uplift into a plateau that is now 8,000 feet high. The lowly Gunnison can not even consider changing its course as its channel is already dug, it must stop running or plow forward. Water drops continue to flow into the river oblivious to how monumental the task is to keep the soft water flowing against the immovable rock. Can a single raindrop make any difference at all? Of course not. But the torrent of drops over two million years has carved a canyon through the Earth's core crystalline rock fifty-three miles long.

I highly recommend visiting this place if you're ever nearby. Peer bravely over one of the silver-black and sleek nearly vertical canyon walls to the rapid water down below. Take a piece of gneiss or schist rock and try in vain to chip even the smallest piece from it. Then toss it over the edge of the Black Canyon into the river running 2,000 feet below. So far down you will lose sight of it before it hits the water.

Perhaps our task of keeping the planet a livable place for our progeny is not quite so formidable, or perhaps it is one of the most difficult things to try to change the beliefs of the human species—beliefs which are threatening every living thing, from the fish in the Gunnison to the life of Gaia herself. But how much more a dedicated person can do than the gentlest water droplet which can not even consider contradicting its nature—to flow forward.

We mustn't deny our despair or ignore the grief it fosters. Yet we mustn't let these things cause us to give up our struggle which is necessary for the survival of our children and this awesomely beautiful planet of which they are made.

The above article was reprinted from the IMAGO newsletter, 553 Enright Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45205.



To the Day When We All Leave the Game Smiling

by Philip White

The following article appeared in the August 1993 issue of Unity Magazine, Unity Village, MO, and is used with permission.

Little squares of wood lay before us on the table. Each had a letter of the alphabet printed on it. On other evenings like this one, my spouse and I had dumped out the square pieces from the Scrabble box, joshing with bravado and stalwart statements about our own intention to win the game.

Now, with the tradition of our competitive upbringing nodding approvingly in the shadows, we prepared again to pit our word skills against each other until one of us triumphed. When it was all over, what passed for good-natured gloating usually lasted only a merciful moment or two.

But that evening something new happened. As we selected our first seven pieces, hiding them from each other, we mused about how it was too bad that some letters never got used before someone won the game. Suddenly we were asking what would happen if we worked together to use every letter? What would happen if we used our creativity to make it easier, instead of harder, for another to make words?

A warmth flooded our conversation, and we laughed at the novelty of letting ourselves join forces. There we were, looking together down a new path with a common mission. The ingenuity of our word selection got better. Creative solutions seemed to appear from a new mind shared between us. The last letter was placed triumphantly. We left the game smiling.

We had stumbled onto a powerful principle: When rivalry is transformed into teamwork, there is a dramatic increase in ideas, resources, alternatives, creativity, and joy in living. But when rivalry remains the byword, our competitive consciousness exacts a surprising toll: it keeps us from sharing our best ideas with each other. As one business writer put it, "Why should I share ideas with you, if I'm only helping by rival to succeed?"

Indeed. This is the catechism of our competitive world. Look again at the wildflowers on our cover. No more diverse environment could be imagined. Yet recent research tells us that in nature's community of blooming individuals, a lavish sharing of skills and resources seems to be the norm.* The limited and one-sided rewards we give for winning our little tournaments stand in stark contrast to the abundance that pours forth in such a community of cooperation.

So Jesus really did know what He was talking about when He said, "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap" (Lk. 6:38). Like laser light in which all the atoms are stimulated to work at a high level of cooperation, teamwork generates powerful resources that are greater than we can muster alone.

So powerful and healing is this idea that our American Revolution couldn't do without it. Rafael Aguayo, writing about the benefits of cooperation in the business world, points out that after the Revolutionary War, the founding fathers discovered that thirteen independent states could produce more good for all when they gave up their competition: "Common borders...would no longer have to be defended. Customs would become much more manageable. Little states would no longer be burdened with the cost of raising an army comparable to their larger neighbors'.... The cost of defending each state would decrease. Trade would increase."** It worked.

It is a cooperative world for which we work at Unity. Across the spectrum of human need from health, to prosperity, to good human relations, to good business, to good government, to world peace, the cooperative spirit has the capacity to release a torrent of creative resources among us all, the likes of which we've rarely seen.

Here's to the day when we all leave the "game" smiling.

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*Anne Fausto-Sterling, "Is Nature Really Red in Tooth and Claw?" *DISCOVER*, April 1993, pp.24-27.

**Rafael Aguayo, *DR. DEMING, Fireside*, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 1990, p.234.

Book Review

BRAIN SEX:THE REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN. Anne Moir and David Jessel. Carol Publishing Group, Secaucus, NJ. 1991; 242pp.

Walt Tulecke

Here is a book that will help us understand why, "Men are different from women." Moir, with a Ph.D. in Genetics, and Jessel, a journalist for BBC-TV, both English, lay out in very readable prose the story of the biological determination of male and female traits and behaviors. The text is as compelling as Deborah Tannen's *You Just Don't Understand...Women and Men in Conversation*, now running for 132 weeks on the New York Times Bestseller List.

The story begins at conception when the XX or XY sex determination occurs; but the male pattern of brain connections and biochemical imprinting occurs at six weeks with a flush of male sex hormone (testosterone). Behavioral differences between boys and girls are evident very early and reach a peak when teenage testosterone in the males helps to determine their adult male characteristics. Estrogens and other hormones in teenage girls helps to determine their development into adult women.

The basic human developmental pattern is female and only the "slush" of testosterone will be powerful enough to divert this pattern to maleness. As Moir and Jessel describe it, the basic character of a woman emphasizes personal relationships, social service, communication, the ethics of caring, the left hemisphere functions of speaking, reading, and writing, as well as all the attributes of being a mother. "By contrast the adult male brain expresses itself in high motivation, singlemindedness, risk-taking, aggression, preoccupation with dominance, hierarchy, and the politics of power, the constant measurement and comparison of success itself, the paramountcy of winning — everything which we found in the male as an adolescent."

To those who champion social and cultural influences as the primary determinants of human behavioral differences between males and females, Moir and Jessel offer evidence for the importance of biological factors such as hormones. To them the biochemical events occurring in developing males and females

leads to different thought patterns, different values, and different strategies for life.

Moir and Jessel present their findings in a stream of clear writing, uncluttered by references, footnotes or many names. This makes the text very readable, with chapter titles such as, *The Birth of Differences*, *Sex in the Brain*, *The Marriage of Two Minds*, and *Why Mothers Are Not Fathers*. Yet there is an extensive list of references at the end of the book and an excellent guide to quotations in the text. They present evidence from a large body of scientific findings and they provide their interpretation of what these results suggest. They forthrightly take responsibility, "the book is ours," and they hope to provide information, understanding, and provoke discussion. For example, they argue that women and men approach a problem with fundamentally different assumptions and thought processes. Women view the larger picture within which the human drama occurs, whereas men are more interested in analysis, detail and a linear-derived solution.

The human brain of males and females develops in different hormonal environments. Under these influences the brain connections, the hypothalamus, the corpus callosum, and the two hemispheres develop to give women one array of attributes such as ease of verbal expression, wider peripheral vision, skin sensitivity, a good memory for names, acute hearing, a taste for sweets, and other abilities. Men, on the other hand, like salty items, have a more focused spatial field, recognize patterns, develop eye-to-hand coordination, and are more adept at abstractions such as mathematics. Thus, women orient to relationships, contacts and interdependence; men are more self-sufficient and self-centered.

Throughout the book though, the authors make it clear that these differences are not the same for everyone, that there are degrees of differences between men and women. Their hypothesis is that the differences depend on how much male hormones were received by the fetus at a certain time and during puberty.

If there is any conclusion to this book, it is that women and men are each endowed biologically with different strengths. Knowing, and appreciating, and respecting each other's integrity could help women and men in their collaborative interactions in society, in raising

a family, at work, or in bed. In the words of Moir and Jessel, "maybe we can hope that men and women will be more honest about how they feel," ... happier to be themselves,... and enjoy a celebration of difference.



Readers Write

ABOUT COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SOCIETY

I am a great admirer of your Yellow Springs Community, the Morgan family, and all you have stood for over the years; your current continuing efforts toward communities and their intrinsic value to all society. The time when Earth depends on the organic units called "communities" may come again unless we humans find a quick way to cure our sick society and our Nature/Animals/Environment very soon. I enjoy your newsletter very, very much. More than I can say.

Lucy Meyer, 400 Acacia St., Morro Bay, CA 93442

ABOUT COMMENTARY BY GRISCOM MORGAN AND DOUG BYERS ON "COMMUNITY, DENSITY, AND THE FUTURE" WHICH APPEARED IN OUR JULY/AUGUST 1993 NEWSLETTER

I feel [this article] seriously discredits the Newsletter and intended to answer it. But how to answer it — it's just too flaky. I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings either, but, as with the Hundredth Monkey hoax, your message is too important to get thrown out with the bilgewater of fantasy pseudoscience. I'm really sorry this came about.

Mark Drake, PO Box 400, Leggett, CA 95585

ABOUT OUR NOV./DEC. NEWSLETTER

Thanks for an excellent issue of the *Community Service Newsletter*. I was glad to see the recognition of Griscom and his work. The selection of the Joseph Ferry article was excellent! And I did enjoy reading Elisabeth's account of the recent conference.

William M. Alexander, 30 El Mirador Court, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

Announcements

GRAILVILLE NEW WOMEN, NEW EARTH SEMESTER, JAN. 25-MAY 18, 1994

This "apprenticeship in alternative living" combines study of ecofeminism, spirituality, social justice with experience in Grailville's organic gardens and art projects. Open to women of all ages. College credit may be arranged. Cost: \$2,600-3,000 (sliding scale). Limited scholarship assistance available. For more information or registration, write: Grailville Programs, 932 O'Bannonville Road, Loveland, OH 45140.

OEFFA's ANNUAL CONFERENCE, FEB. 26-27

"Making Connections" will be the theme of the Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association's 15th annual conference, to be held in Ada, OH. This two-day conference will help large and small growers, gardeners, or anyone, make the needed connections for profitable and healthy living and community building. For more information or registration write to OEFFA Conference, 65 Plymouth St., Plymouth, OH 44865.

COMPOST BINS

Our member Greg Haas has made wire compost bins for sale at \$14, \$16, or \$18 plus UPS. He says they are simple, functional, and durable. They come in 3', 4', or 5' diameters. For more information, write him at 805 N. Washington St., Bloomington, IN 47408.

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Membership

Membership is a means of supporting and sharing the work of Community Service. The Basic \$25 annual membership contribution includes a subscription to our bimonthly NEWSLETTER and 10% off Community Service-published literature. Larger contributions are always needed, however, and smaller ones will be gladly accepted. Community Service is a nonprofit corporation which depends on contributions and the sale of literature to fund its work so that it can offer its services to those who need them. All contributions are appreciated, needed and tax-deductible. Due to added postage costs, overseas membership is \$30 in U. S. currency.

Have Your Friends Seen The Newsletter?

Please send the names and addresses of your friends who might enjoy receiving a sample NEWSLETTER and booklist. If you wish specific issues sent, please send \$1 per copy.

Editor's Note

We welcome letters to the editor (under 300 words) and articles (700-2000 words) about any notable communities or people who are improving the quality of life in their communities. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish the article returned. The only compensation we can offer is the satisfaction of seeing your words in print and knowing you have helped spread encouraging and/or educational information.

Editor's Note #2

We occasionally exchange our mailing list with a group with similar purposes such as the Arthur Morgan School at Celo or Communities Magazine. If you do not wish us to give your name to anyone, please let us know.

Address Change

If there is an error on your mailing label, or you are moving, please send the old label and any corrections to us. It increases our cost greatly if the Post Office notifies us of moves, and you will not receive your newsletter promptly.

Consultation

Community Service makes no set charge for formal or informal consultation. Customarily, we ask for a contribution at a rate equal to the client's hourly earnings.

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You can tell when your Community Service membership expires by looking at the month and year in the upper left corner of your mailing label. Please renew your membership now if it has expired or will expire before 2/94. The minimum membership contribution is \$25 per year. We do not send individual reminders to renew.

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